

- Other species with monetary and non-monetary benefits to people accruing from consumptive and nonconsumptive human uses including, but not limited to, fishing, hunting, bird-watching and educational, aesthetic, scientific or subsistence uses.

An analysis based only on those species with directly identifiable economic or social value may not be broad enough to adequately describe all of the ramifications of a land and water use proposal. If it is desirable to increase the ecological perspective of an assessment, the following types of species should be considered:

- Species known to be sensitive to specific land and water use actions. The species selected with this approach serve as "early warning" or indicator species for the affected fish and wildlife community.

- Species that perform a key role in a community because of their role in nutrient cycling or energy flows. These species also serve as indicators for a large segment of the fish and wildlife community, but may be difficult to identify.

- Species that represent groups of species which utilize a common environmental resource (guilds). A representative species is selected from each guild and predicted environmental impacts for the selected species are extended with some degree of confidence to other guild members.

*"Federal action agency"* means a department, agency or instrumentality of the United States which plans, constructs, operates or maintains a project, or which plans for or approves a permit, lease, or license for projects or manages Federal lands.

*"Fish and wildlife resources"* means birds, fishes, mammals, and all other classes of wild animals and all types of aquatic and land vegetation upon which wildlife is dependent.

*"Habitat"* means the area which provides direct support for a given species, population, or community. It includes all environmental features that comprise an area such as air quality, water quality, vegetation and soil characteristics and water supply (including both surface and groundwater).

*"Habitat value"* means the suitability of an area to support a given evaluation species.

*"Important Resource Problem"* means a clearly defined problem with a single important population or a community of similar species in a given geographic area as defined by the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

*"In-kind replacement"* means providing or managing substitute

resources to replace the habitat value of the resources lost, where such substitute resources are physically and biologically the same or closely approximate those lost.

*"Loss"* means a change in fish and wildlife resources due to human activities that is considered adverse and;

- (1) reduces the biological value of that habitat for evaluation species;

- (2) reduces population numbers of evaluation species;

- (3) increases population numbers of "nuisance" species;

- (4) reduces the human use of those fish and wildlife resources; or

- (5) disrupts ecosystem structure and function.

Changes that improve the value of existing habitat for evaluation species are not to be considered losses, i.e., burning or selective tree harvesting for wildlife management purposes. In addition, reductions in animal populations for the purpose of harvest or fish and wildlife management will not be considered as losses for the purpose of this policy.

*"Minimize"* means to reduce to the smallest practicable amount or degree.

*"Mitigation banking"* means habitat protection or improvement actions taken expressly for the purpose of compensating for unavoidable losses from specific future development actions. It only includes those actions above and beyond those typically taken by Congress for protection of fish and wildlife resources.

*"Out-of-kind replacement"* means providing or managing substitute resources to replace the habitat value of the resources lost, where such substitute resources are physically or biologically different from those lost.

*"Planning area"* means a geographic space with an identified boundary that includes:

- (1) The area identified in the study's authorizing document;

- (2) The locations of resources included in the study's identified problems and opportunities;

- (3) The locations of alternative plans, often called "project areas;" and

- (4) The locations of resources that would be directly, indirectly, or cumulatively affected by alternative plans, often called the "affected area."

*"Practicable"* means capable of being done within existing constraints. The test of what is practicable depends upon the situation and includes consideration of the pertinent factors, such as environment, cost, or technology.

*"Project"* means any action, planning or approval process relating to an action

that will directly or indirectly affect fish and wildlife resources.

*"Replacement"* means the substitution or offsetting of fish and wildlife resource losses with resources considered to be of equivalent biological value. However, resources used for replacement represent loss or modification of another type of habitat value. Replacement actions still result in a loss of habitat acreage and types which will continually diminish the overall national resource base. It should be clearly understood that replacement actions never restore the lost fish and wildlife resource—that is lost forever.

Dated: January 13, 1981.

Cecil Andrus,

Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

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